THE HUMAN TORCH

NOV. No. 33

COMICS

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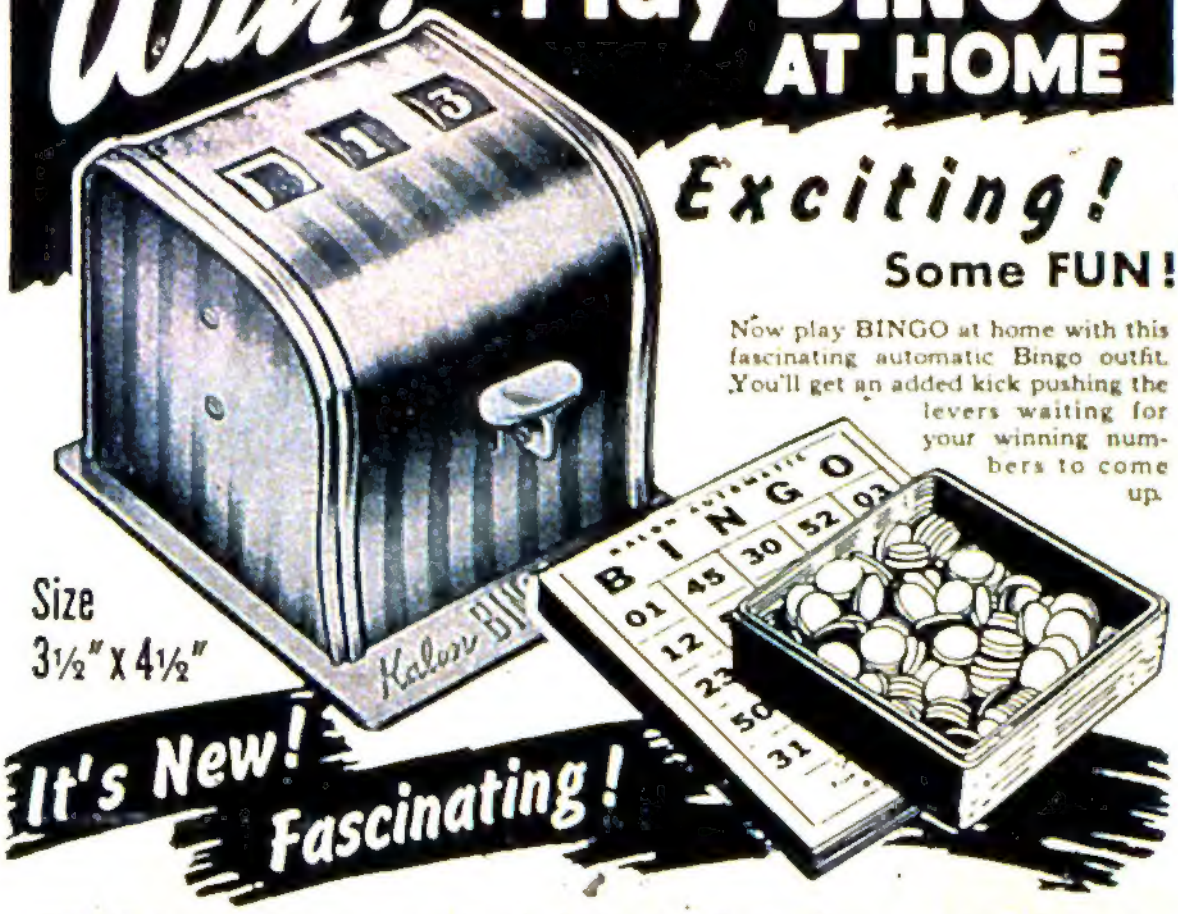

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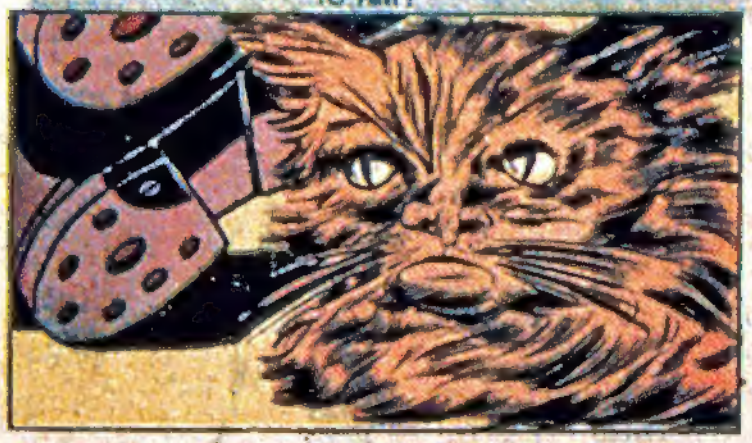
THE HUMAN TORCH

A STRANGE, UNKNOWN HORROR GRIPS OUR PLANET! ANIMALS ARE GOING MAD—TURNING ON THEIR MASTERS! SOON, HUMANS WILL SUFFER THE SAME EFFECTS AND, WITHOUT REASON, WAR ON EACH OTHER! IT *CAN* HAPPEN! IT *DID* HAPPEN! WHAT WAS THE TERRIFYING CAUSE OF ALL THIS? THE ANSWER WILL ASTOUND YOU! THIS IS THE STORY OF A POWER SO MONSTROUS, SO OVERWHELMING THAT *CAPTAIN AMERICA* WAS CALLED IN TO HELP *THE HUMAN TORCH* AND *SUN GIRL* IN

THE RAY OF MADNESS!

A FEW ASSORTED, SEEMINGLY UNASSOCIATED EVENTS ARE THE FIRST SIGNALS OF A CATASTROPHE THAT IS TO UNFOLD INTO THE STRANGE UNBELIEVABLE TALE YOU WILL READ NOW! FOR INSTANCE—TAKE THIS PEACEFUL, DOMESTIC CAT AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS TO HIM!



SUDDENLY...

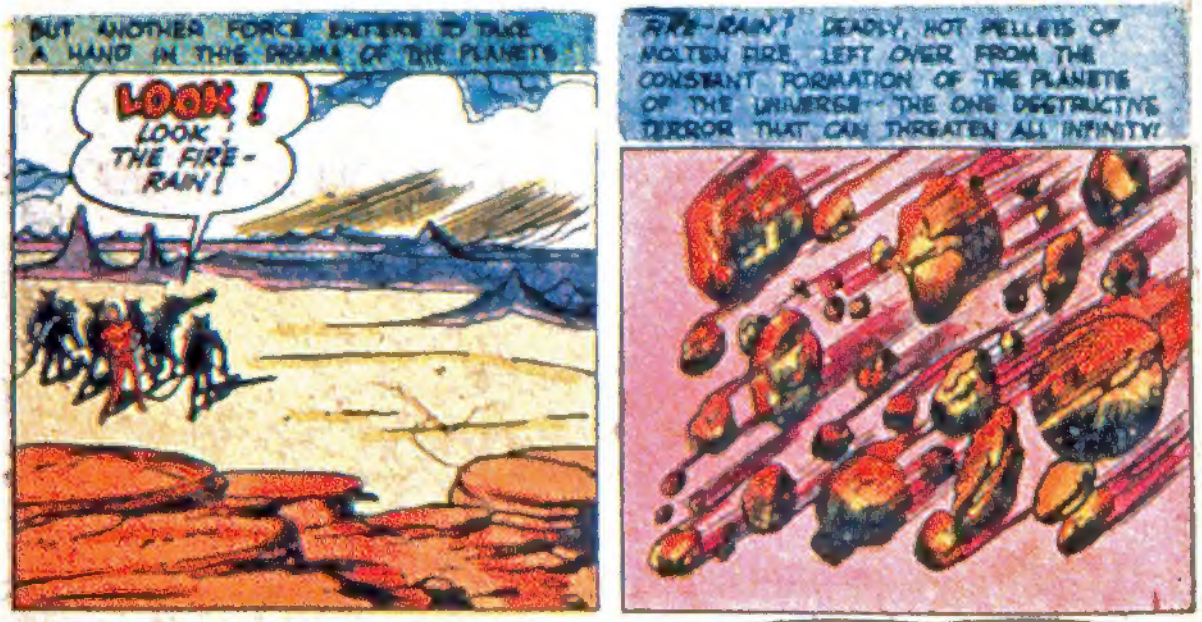
AND THE MAN'S FACE FREEZES IN HORROR AS HE SEES...
NO! NO! TABBY!
HELP! HELP!
YEEOWSRH!
AT THAT VERY MOMENT, A FEW MILES AWAY, A FARMER IS HARNESSING HIS FAITHFUL OLD HORSE TO HIS WAGON!
YOUR POOR OLD BONES MUST BE VERY WEARY, NELLY! BUT THIS TRIP WON'T BE A LONG ONE!
BUT THE OLD NAG IS SUDDENLY GALVANIZED INTO A FIERY BEAST OF DESTRUCTION!
NEIGH!
NELLY! DON'T! NO!
IN A MATTER OF MOMENTS, THE COUNTRY IS STIRRED BY A STRANGE ANNOUNCEMENT!
... AND IN CONCLUSION, YOU ARE WARNED TO LOCK UP OR CHAIN ALL DOMESTIC PETS AND ANIMALS! THIS IS VITAL AS YOUR LIFE MAY DEPEND ON IT! NO ONE KNOWS WHAT IS CAUSING IT, BUT ANIMALS BY THE THOUSANDS ARE ATTACKING AND KILLING PEOPLE! THE NATION'S FOREMOST SCIENTISTS ARE WORKING ON THE PROBLEM NOW...
... AND IN THE JEFFERSONIAN INSTITUTE IN NEW YORK CITY, AN IMPORTANT DISCOVERY IS ANNOUNCED!
GENTLEMEN, THIS STRANGE PHENOMENON IS CAUSED, WE DISCOVERED, BY THE EFFECTS OF RAYS EMANATING FROM THE PLANET JUPITER!
WHAT? AMAZING!
AMONG THE EXPERTS CALLED IN ARE THE NATION'S ACE TROUBLE-SHOOTERS, CAPTAIN AMERICA, THE HUMAN TORCH, AND SUN GIRL!
DR. JEFFERSON, IS THERE ANY WAY WE CAN OFFSET THE EFFECTS OF THE RAY?
NONE, CAPTAIN AMERICA—NONE! UNLESS... UNLESS...
A
2

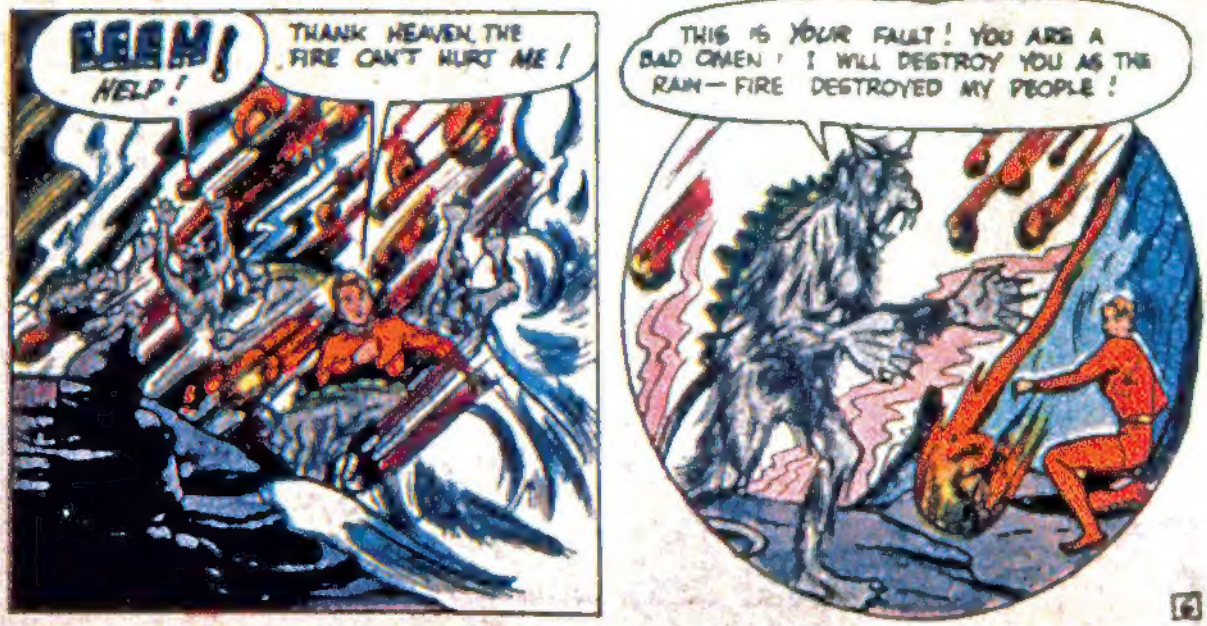
UNLESS IT IS STOPPED AT ITS VERY SOURCE, THE PLANET JUPITER! BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! WE HAVE NO WAY OF GETTING THERE! AND OUR CALCULATIONS SHOW THAT THIS RAY WILL SOON AFFECT HUMAN BEINGS! IN SHORT-- WE WILL ALL GO MAD AND DESTROY ONE ANOTHER!
THERE'S ONLY ONE PERSON ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH WHO WOULD DARE ATTEMPT TRYING TO GET TO JUPITER-- MY FRIEND, THE HUMAN TORCH!
OF COURSE, I'LL TRY! BUT I'VE NEVER ATTEMPTED SUCH A LONG FLIGHT! I DON'T KNOW IF MY FLAME POWER CAN PROJECT ME THAT FAR!
HOWEVER, IT WILL BE AN HONOR TO TRY!
BLESS YOU, TORCH! THE FATE OF ALL HUMANITY DEPENDS ON YOU!
THE NEXT DAY, A HUGE CROWD GATHERS AT LA GUARDIA AIRPORT TO WATCH THE HUMAN TORCH BEGIN HIS HAZARDOUS FLIGHT!
THE BEST WISHES OF THE ENTIRE WORLD GO WITH YOU, TORCH!
THANKS! I'LL NEED THEM! A TRIP TO JUPITER! I'VE NEVER TRIED ANYTHING LIKE THIS BEFORE!
CAPTAIN AMERICA, I MAY NOT RETURN FROM THIS! I DON'T KNOW WHAT SORT, OF DANGERS I FACE! BUT IF I DON'T COME BACK-- PLEASE TAKE CARE OF SUN GIRL!
OF COURSE YOU'LL COME BACK, PAL! GET GOING NOW!
OH, TORCH! BUT YOU WILL COME BACK! YOU WILL!
WHILE THE CROWDS GASP IN WONDER, THE HUMAN TORCH TURNS HIS BODY INTO A MASS OF LIVID FLAME!
FLAME ON!
...AND WITH A ROAR, AS THE FLAME STREAK PROJECTS HIM, THE TORCH FLIES OFF INTO THE UNKNOWN WORLD BEYOND THE SKY!

PLEASE BE MY GUESTS AT MY OBSERVATORY! WE CAN FOLLOW AT LEAST PART OF THE TORCH'S PROGRESS FROM THERE!
GOOD IDEA! THANKS!
I'M REALLY WORRIED ABOUT HIM! HE'S NEVER TRIED ANYTHING LIKE THIS!
YES, WE CAN'T TELL JUST WHAT WILL HAPPEN UP THERE IN THE STRATOSPHERE! I JUST HOPE HE CAN SURVIVE TO TELL US!
MEANWHILE, THE TORCH IS ZOOMING HIGH ABOVE THE CLOUDS!
SO FAR-- SO GOOD! MY FLAME POWER IS STILL QUITE STRONG! HERE'S HOPING!
BUT ON THE PLANET JUPITER, THERE IS ACTIVITY, TOO-- ACTIVITY THAT IS TO BRING THE HUMAN TORCH FACE TO FACE WITH ASTOUNDING ADVENTURE!
FOR HERE IS THE CAUSE OF ALL THE TROUBLE-- THE RED HOT POOL OF PERIL-- FROM WHICH COMES THE RAY OF MADNESS!
SUDDENLY!
DANGER! DANGER! BEWARE! SOME FORCE IS DRAWING CLOSE TO OUR POOL--, OUR LIFE-GIVING POOL OF MADNESS!
OH, KLEEZAR, OUR LEADER, OUR MASTER! SAVE US!
FOR AGES WE HAVE SURVIVED ON THE FIERY WATERS OF THIS POOL! WITHOUT IT, WE, THE NOMAD CREATURES OF MADNESS, THE PARASITES OF THE UNIVERSE, CANNOT EXIST! COME, HIDE BEHIND THE ROCKS! WE SHALL SEE WHAT COMES TO THREATEN US!

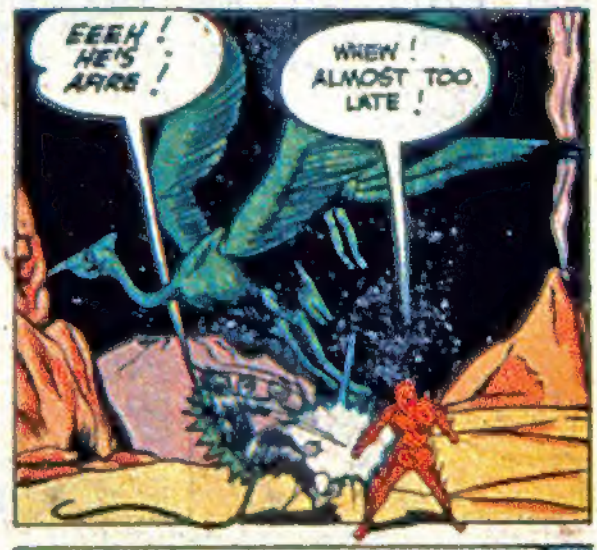
UNAWARE OF THE GREAT PERIL THAT AWAITS HIM, THE TORCH IS MAKING RAPID PROGRESS AS HE DRAWS NEAR TO JUPITER !
JUPITER... AT LAST ! MY FLAME POWER IS GETTING WEAKER ! I'LL JUST MAKE IT BEFORE IT GOES OUT COMPLETELY !
WHEW ! NOT A MOMENT TOO SOON !
...AND HE LANDS JUST AS THE FLAME GOES OUT!
THE RAY OF MADNESS! THIS IS IT! I'VE FOUND IT! I CAN FEEL ITS POWER!
THAT IS OUR ENEMY ! THAT IS THE ONE WE MUST DESTROY IF WE ARE TO SURVIVE !
YES, MASTER ! AS YOU SAY !
BUT IT'S CAUSED BY THE RED-HOT WATERS OF THIS POOL ! I MUST WAIT UNTIL MY FLAME-POWER COMES BACK TO ME BEFORE I CAN DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT !
WOW! WHAT MANNER OF CREATURES ARE THESE ?
THE HUMAN TORCH FIGHTS VALIANTLY AGAINST INSURMOUNTABLE ODDS, FOR WITHOUT HIS FLAME HE IS NO MATCH FOR THESE CREATURES OF HORROR !

FLAME ON! FLAME ON!
YOU HAVE COME TO DESTROY OUR POOL OF MADNESS, STRANGE ONE! SO NOW WE WILL DESTROY YOU!
BUT YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! IT IS CAUSING UNTOLD MADNESS ON THE EARTH FROM WHICH I COME! IT MUST BE DONE AWAY WITH!
FIE ON YOUR EARTH PEOPLE! WHAT DO I CARE ABOUT THEM? WITHOUT THE FIERY WATERS OF THE POOL, WE, THE SCAVENGERS OF THE STRATOSPHERE, WILL BE NO MORE! SO YOU, EARTH-MAN, MUST GO TO A SWIFT END!
BUT TORCH'S CRY IS OF NO USE! THE LONG TRIP FROM THE EARTH HAS COMPLETELY EXHAUSTED THE FLAME-POWER OF THE FIGHTING MAN OF FIRE


BUT ANOTHER FORCE ENTERS TO TAKE A HAND IN THIS DRAMA OF THE PLANETS
LOOK! LOOK! THE FIRE-RAIN!
FIRE-RAIN! DEADLY, HOT PELLETS OF MOLTEN FIRE, LEFT OVER FROM THE CONSTANT FORMATION OF THE PLANETS OF THE UNIVERSE—THE ONE DESTRUCTIVE TERROR THAT CAN THREATEN ALL INFINITY!


HELP!
THANK HEAVEN, THE FIRE CAN'T HURT ME!
THIS IS YOUR FAULT! YOU ARE A BAD OMEN! I WILL DESTROY YOU AS THE RAIN—FIRE DESTROYED MY PEOPLE!

BUT SUDDENLY THE FLAME-POWER RETURNS TO THE TORCH AT THE VERY LAST SECOND!



THE RELEASED WATERS PLUNGE OUT OF THE POOL WITH A FURY !
EEEH!
THE FIRE-WATER IS GOING TO DROWN ME !

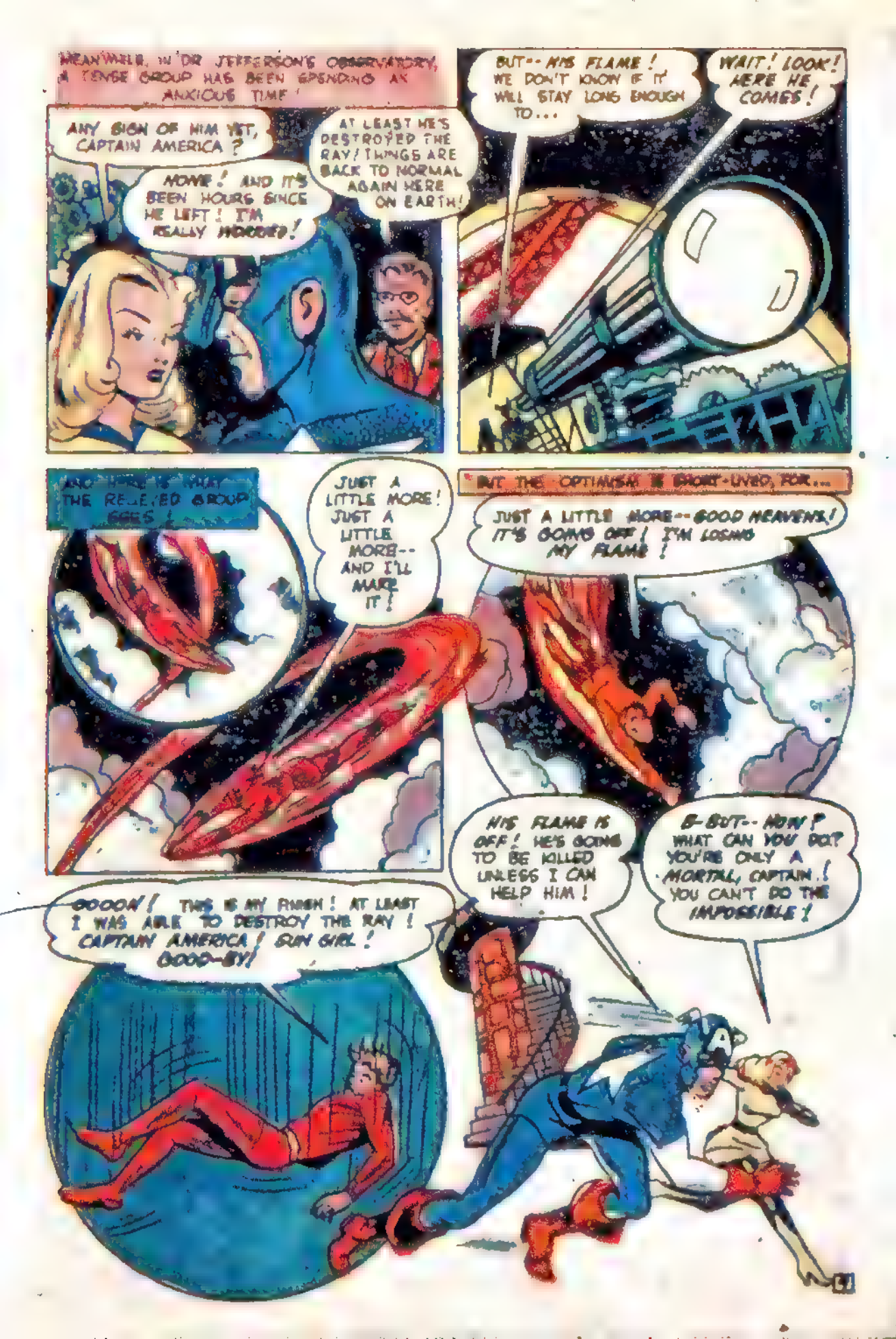
AND KLEEZAR, THE LAST OF HIS TRIBE, TURNS TO FLEE THE RAGING, HOT, SCALDING WATERS OF THE POO OF MADNESS !
EEEEH!
NO ! NO !

BUT THE JUDGMENT OF THE UNIVERSE PASSES A SWIFT AND AWFUL PUNISHMENT ON KLEEZAR, THE PARASITE OF ETERNITY !

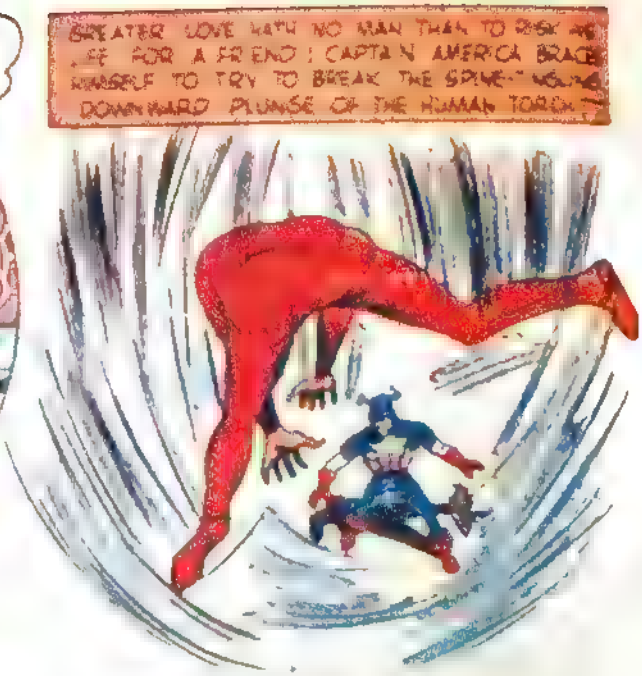
MOVING WITH THE SPEED OF LIGHTNING, THE HUMAN TORCH DESTROYS THE REMNANTS OF THE MAD-RAY WITH HIS BODY OF FIRE !

AT LAST-- ALL IS GONE! THE POOL-- THE RAY-- AND THE JUPITER-MEN ! I MUST SAY I WOULDN'T LIKE TO FACE A PROBLEM LIKE THIS EVERY DAY !

NOW FOR THE LAST AND MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THIS ADVENTURE-- MY TRIP HOME ! OH, LET MY FLAME LAST ! LET IT STAY UNTIL I RETURN TO EARTH !

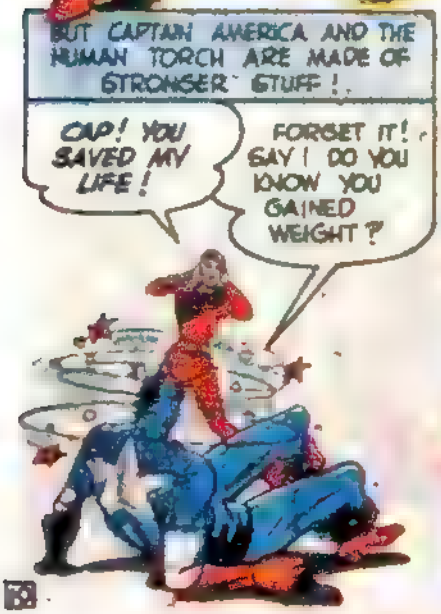

MEANWHILE, IN DR JEFFERSON'S OBSERVATORY, A TENSE GROUP HAS BEEN SPENDING AN ANXIOUS TIME!
ANY SIGN OF HIM YET, CAPTAIN AMERICA?
NOPE! AND IT'S BEEN HOURS SINCE HE LEFT! I'M REALLY WORRIED!
AT LEAST HE'S DESTROYED THE RAY! THINGS ARE BACK TO NORMAL AGAIN HERE ON EARTH!
BUT-- HIS FLAME! WE DON'T KNOW IF IT WILL STAY LONG ENOUGH TO...
WAIT! LOOK! HERE HE COMES!
AND HERE IS WHAT THE RELIEVED GROUP SEES!
JUST A LITTLE MORE! JUST A LITTLE MORE-- AND I'LL MAKE IT!
BUT THE OPTIMISM IS SHORT-LIVED, FOR...
JUST A LITTLE MORE-- GOOD HEAVENS! IT'S GOING OFF! I'M LOSING MY FLAME!
HIS FLAME IS OFF! HE'S GOING TO BE KILLED UNLESS I CAN HELP HIM!
B-BUT-- HOW? WHAT CAN YOU DO? YOU'RE ONLY A MORTAL, CAPTAIN! YOU CAN'T DO THE IMPOSSIBLE!
OOOOH! THIS IS MY FINISH! AT LEAST I WAS ABLE TO DESTROY THE RAY! CAPTAIN AMERICA! SUN GIRL! GOOD-BY!

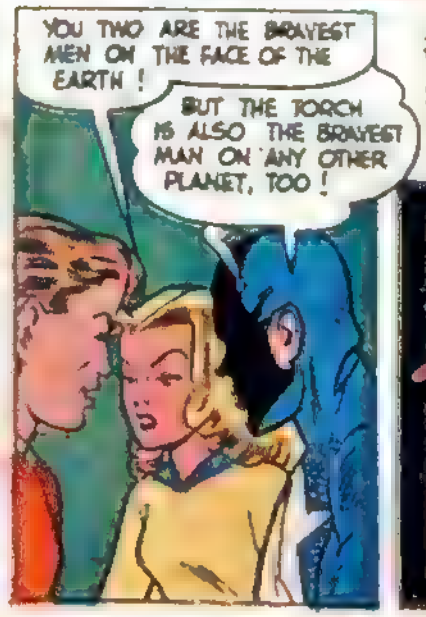
NO I'M NOT A SUPER-BEING! BUT I HAVE STRENGTH-- AND LOYALTY FOR A FRIEND! IF THE TORCH DIES-- IF I CAN'T SAVE HIM-- I'LL DIE, TOO!


GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN TO RISK HIS LIFE FOR A FRIEND! CAPTAIN AMERICA BRACES HIMSELF TO TRY TO BREAK THE SPINE-WRENCHING DOWNWARD PLUNGE OF THE HUMAN TORCH!

CAPT-- OH!
KA-PLUNK!
UGH!
OOH! I CAN'T LOOK!

CAP! TORCH! OH! THEY'RE BOTH DEAD!


BUT CAPTAIN AMERICA AND THE HUMAN TORCH ARE MADE OF STRONGER STUFF!
CAP! YOU SAVED MY LIFE!
FORGET IT! SAY! DO YOU KNOW YOU GAINED WEIGHT?


YOU TWO ARE THE BRAVEST MEN ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH!
BUT THE TORCH IS ALSO THE BRAVEST MAN ON ANY OTHER PLANET, TOO!

AND ONCE AGAIN, THANKS TO THE DEATH-DEFYING ADVENTURE OF THE HUMAN TORCH, THE UNIVERSE IS RESTORED TO ITS NORMAL WAY OF EXISTENCE!
THE END

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THE HUMAN TORCH

WHAT IS IT? CAN IT BE POSSIBLE? THAT'S WHAT EVERYBODY INCLUDING THE HUMAN TORCH, WANTED TO KNOW, WHEN THE SIGHT GREETED THEIR AMAZED EYES! YOU'LL FIND OUT, TOO, WHEN YOU READ ...

"HORROR HOTEL!"

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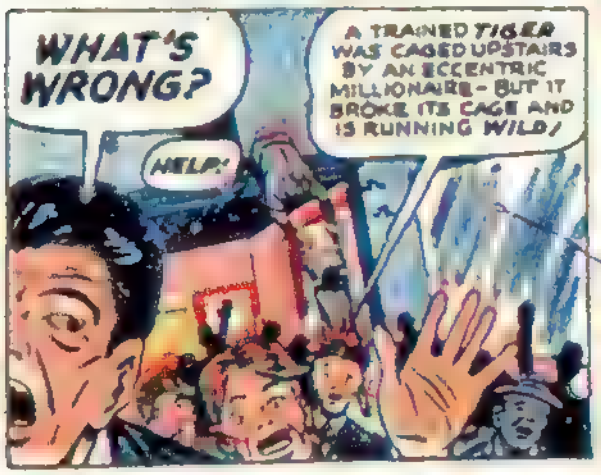
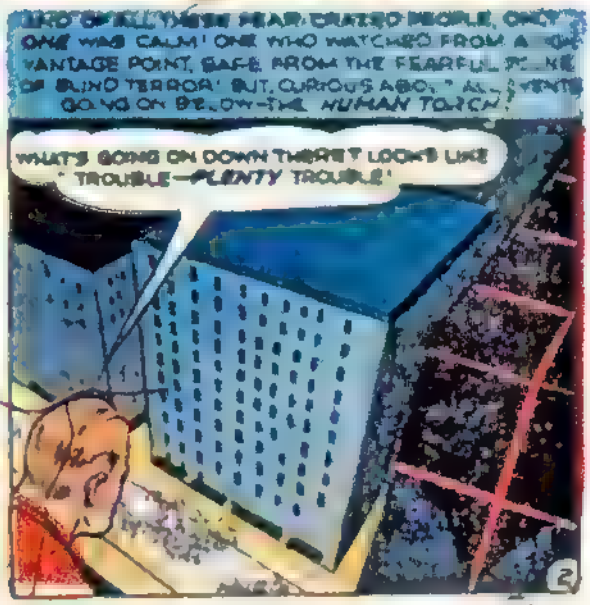
STUDY THIS PICTURE CAREFULLY, READER! IT IS A PLACID SCENE IN THE EVERYDAY LIFE OF THE DIGNIFIED HOTEL WALTON! PEACEFUL, ISN'T IT? BUT HOLD ON TO YOUR SEATS BECAUSE...

HERE WE GO!

HELP!

RUMOR! THE STATEMENTS OF THE UNINFORMED AND UNKNOWING! SENSELESS, MEANINGLESS PHRASES GROWING OUT OF FEAR AND ILLOGIC! THE STRANGE PANIC OF THE HOTEL GUEST SENDS THE OTHERS RUNNING PELL-MELL INTO THE STREETS, AS THE CONTAGION OF PANIC SPREADS ALL OVER—TO EACH ONE IN THE BIG HOTEL!

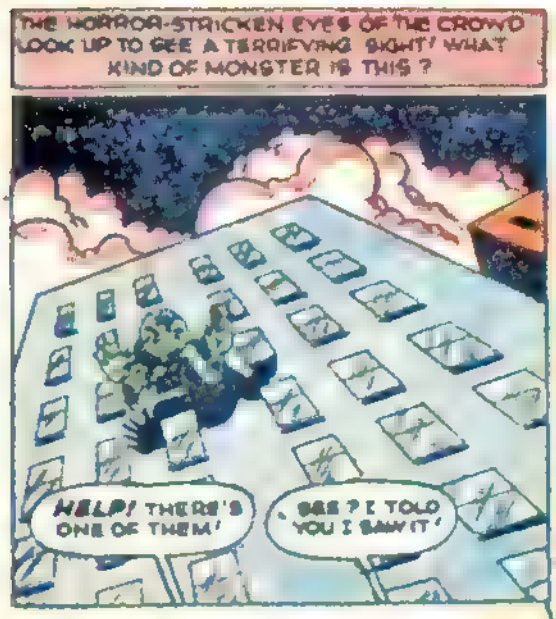




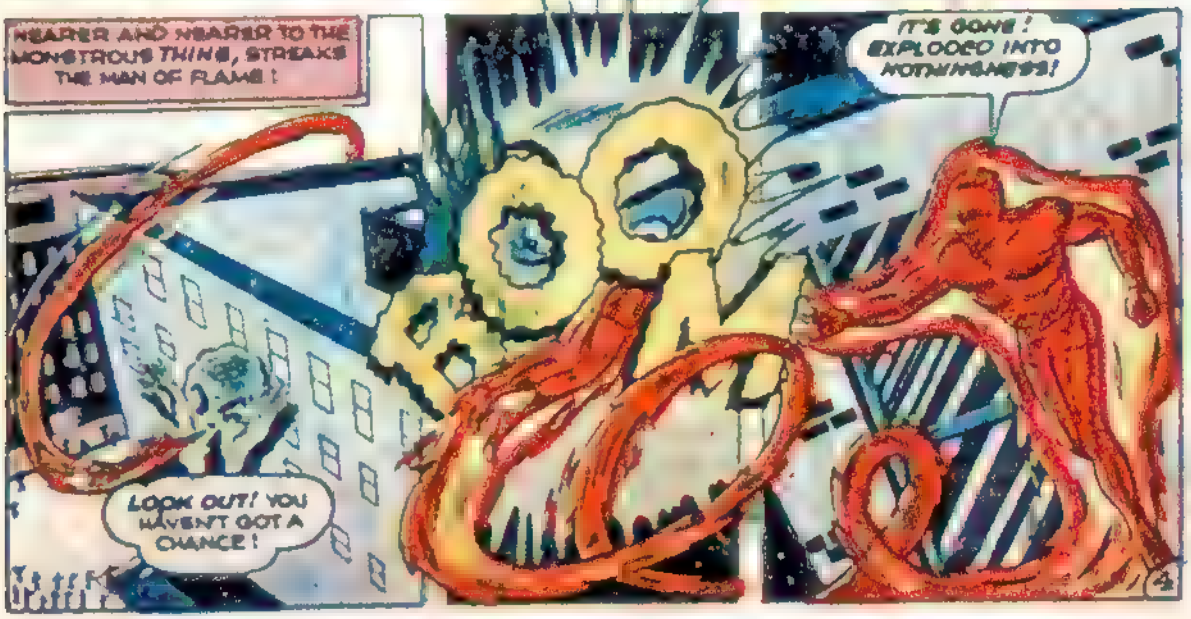
UTTERING TWO WORDS, THE FIGURE BURSTS INTO A BLAZE OF FIRE!
FLAME ON!
EEEK-K LOOK!
THE HUMAN TORCH!
MAYBE HE CAN ROUND UP THE MAN-KILLING BEAST!
MAN-KILLING BEAST? IN A HOTEL?
THE MAN OF FLAME TURNS OFF HIS FIRE AND FACES THE WILD THRONG!
CALM DOWN! I'M GOING TO HELP YOU! DON'T BE PANICKY! WILL SOMEONE TELL ME WHAT'S WRONG?
THE BEASTS WILL DESTROY US!
THEY'VE ALREADY KILLED A MAN!
THEY'LL KILL US ALL!
THAT'S HARD TO BELIEVE! WHO ACTUALLY SAW THEM?
HE SAW THEM—HEY! WHERE IS HE?
SOMEONE MUST HAVE SEEN THEM!
I HEARD THEY WERE TREMENDOUS!
YES! AND THEY'RE STILL IN THE HOTEL! DON'T STAND HERE—THEY'LL DESTROY US!
SWIFTLY, TORCH FORMS A RING OF FIRE AROUND THE COLOSSAL CROWD...
YES! LET'S GET AWAY!
WHA—? HE'S MAKING A RING OF FIRE AROUND US!
WE CAN'T GET AWAY! HE'LL BURN US ALIVE!
NO, I WON'T! I JUST WANT TO KEEP YOU FOLKS FROM GOING BERSERK! I'LL FIND OUT WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT!

IF YOU CAN! OH, SIR, IF YOU ONLY CAN!
BUT HOW CAN YOU? THEY'RE BEASTS—MONSTERS!
LEAVE THAT TO ME! YOU PEOPLE WAIT HERE!

SUDDENLY,
LOOK! LOOK!

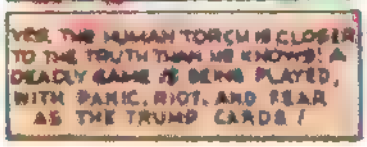

THE HORROR-STRICKEN EYES OF THE CROWD LOOK UP TO SEE A TERRIFYING SIGHT! WHAT KIND OF MONSTER IS THIS?
HELP! THERE'S ONE OF THEM!
SEE? I TOLD YOU I SAW IT!

WITHOUT A MOMENT'S HESITATION, THE TORCH FLAMES INTO ACTION!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS—BUT HERE GOES!


NEARER AND NEARER TO THE MONSTROUS THING, STREAKS THE MAN OF FLAME!
LOOK OUT! YOU HAVEN'T GOT A CHANCE!
IT'S GONE! EXPLODED INTO NOTHINGNESS!

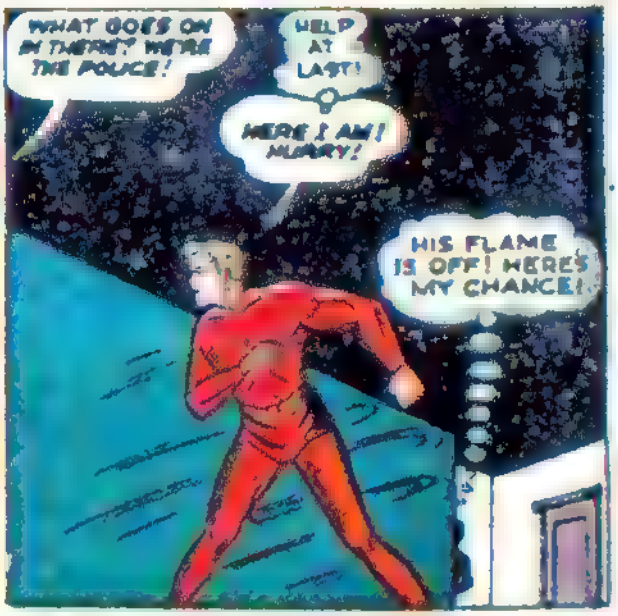
IF THIS IS WHAT I THINK IT IS, I'LL SOON FIND OUT—I HOPE—UNLESS—UNLESS—?

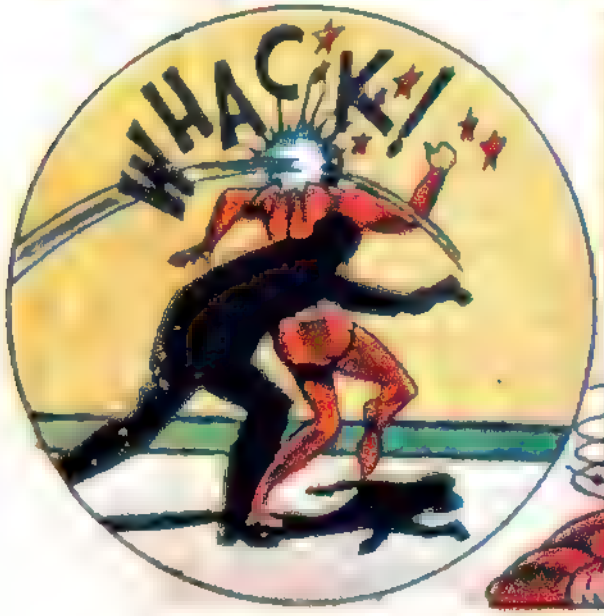
OH NO! A THIN PIECE OF RUBBER TUBE! SOMEBODY HAS BEEN PLAYING A GAME—A DEADLY GAME!

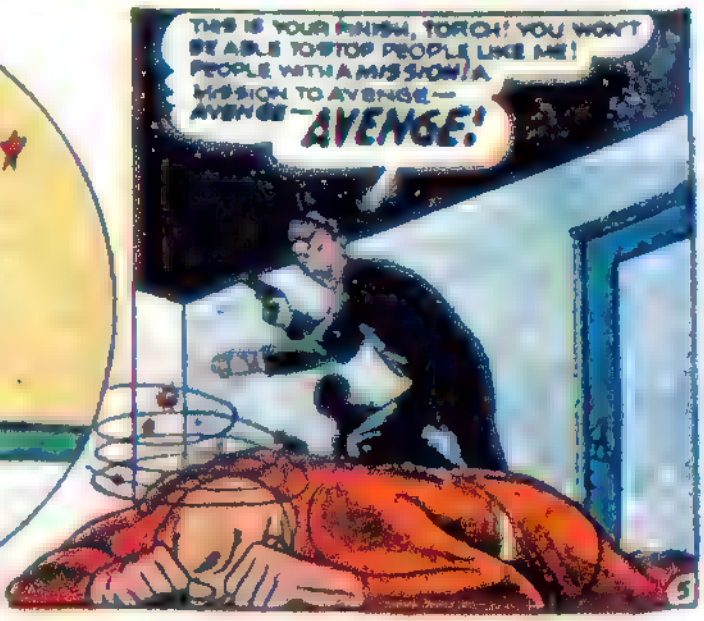

YES, THE HUMAN TORCH IS CLOSER TO THE TRUTH THAN HE KNOWS! A DEADLY GAME IS BEING PLAYED, WITH PANIC, RIOT, AND FEAR AS THE TRUMP CARDS!

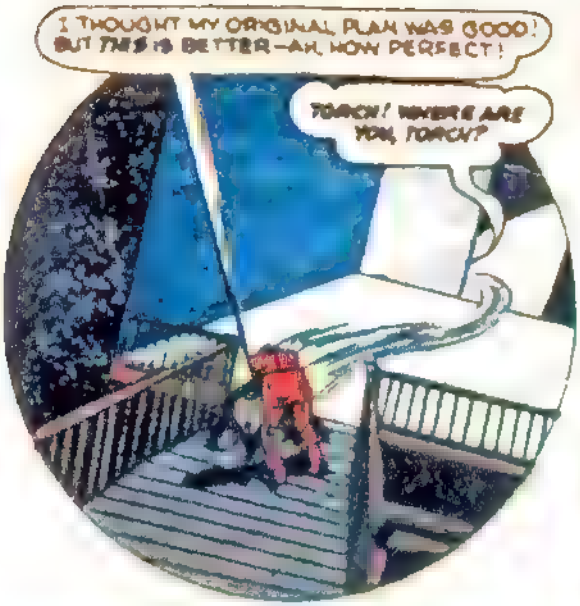
WHY DID HE HAVE TO COME ALONG? EVERYTHING WAS GOING SO RIGHT! BUT HOW CAN I STOP HIM? HOW CAN I DESTROY THE HUMAN TORCH?

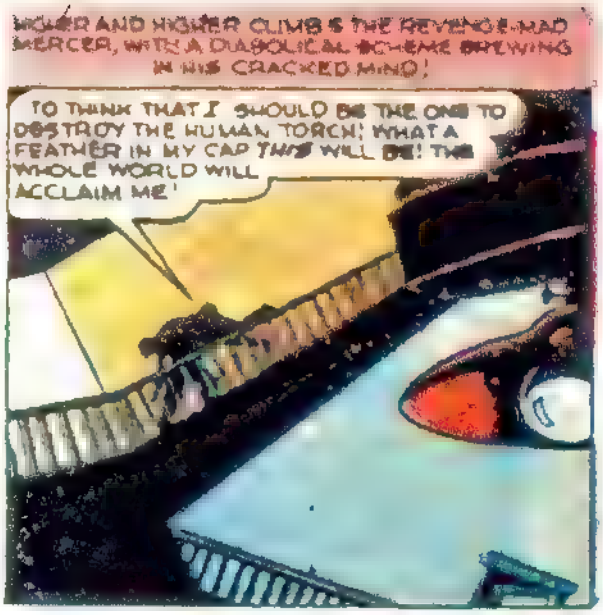
HE WASN'T TOO CLEVER, WHOEVER IT WAS! HE DEPENDED ON THE PANIC TO DO HIS WORK FOR HIM! I WON'T NEED THIS FLAME ON ANY MORE! FLAME OFF!


WHAT GOES ON IN THERE? HERE'S THE POLICE!
HELP AT LAST!
HERE I AM! HURRY!
HIS FLAME IS OFF! HERE'S MY CHANCE!


WHACK!


THIS IS YOUR FINISH, TORCH! YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO STOP PEOPLE LIKE ME! PEOPLE WITH A MISSION! A MISSION TO AVENGE—AVENGE—AVENGE!

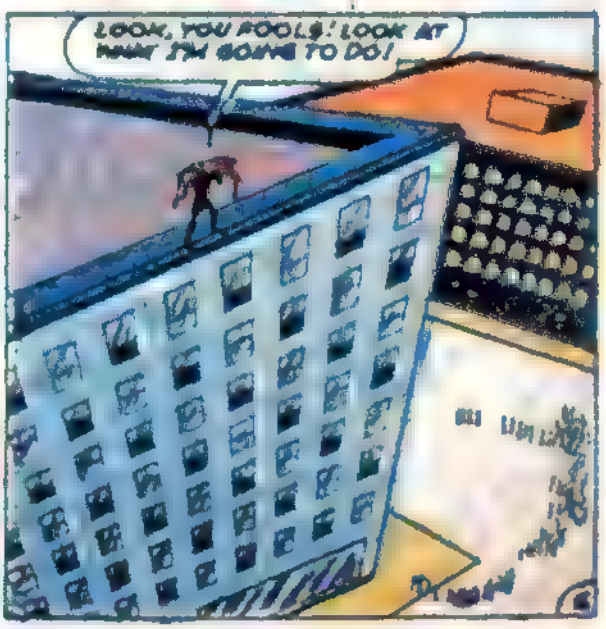

I THOUGHT MY ORIGINAL PLAN WAS GOOD! BUT THIS IS BETTER—AH, HOW PERFECT!
TORCH! WHERE ARE YOU, TORCH?


HIGHER AND HIGHER CLIMBS THE REVENGE-MAD MERCER, WITH A DIABOLICAL SCHEME BREWING IN HIS CRACKED MIND!
TO THINK THAT I SHOULD BE THE ONE TO DESTROY THE HUMAN TORCH! WHAT A FEATHER IN MY CAP THIS WILL BE! THE WHOLE WORLD WILL ACCLAIM ME!

AND DOWN BELOW, THE POLICE HUNT FRANTICALLY FOR THE TORCH!
ANY SIGN OF HIM?
NONE AT ALL, CAPTAIN! WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED TO HIM?

UPSTAIRS, MEN! WE DON'T KNOW WHAT MADMAN IS LOOSE IN THIS HOTEL AND THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT SPOT THE TORCH IS IN! WE'VE GOT TO FIND HIM! QUICK, LET'S GO!

BUT...
HOW TO REALLY CAP MY ACT! I'LL TEACH 'EM TO FIRE ME!


LOOK, YOU FOOLS! LOOK AT WHAT I'M GOING TO DO!

THIS IS THE FINISH OF YOUR HERO THE HUMAN TORCH! PREPARE TO WELCOME HIM INTO YOUR ARMS!
THAT VOICE! IT'S MERCER! WE FIRED HIM TODAY FOR PETTY THIEVERY!
HE'S GOING TO THROW THE TORCH DOWN!
STOP HIM! HE'S CRAZY!
JUST AT THAT MOMENT, THE MAD MAN RELEASES THE TORCH!
HERE HE IS! HERE'S YOUR HERO! TAKE HIM! HA-HA-HA-NO!
BUT SUDDENLY HALFWAY DOWN, THE TORCH BURSTS INTO FLAME...
RUN-WHAT HAPPENED?
SURPRISE!
...AND ZOOMED BACK TOWARD THE AMAZED MERCER!
NO-NO-NO! STAY AWAY FROM ME!
TRY TO KILL ME, EH? WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT!
HE'S SAFE! THE TORCH IS SAFE!
WOW! LOOK AT HIM GO!
ATTA BOY! GO GET HIM!
JUST THOUGHT I'D PLAY DEAD FOR A WHILE AND SEE—HEY, COME BACK HERE!

MERCER RUNS MADLY TOWARD THE EDGE OF THE ROOF!
GOT TO STOP HIM, QUICK!
YOU WON'T GET ME ALIVE. I'LL KILL MYSELF FIRST!

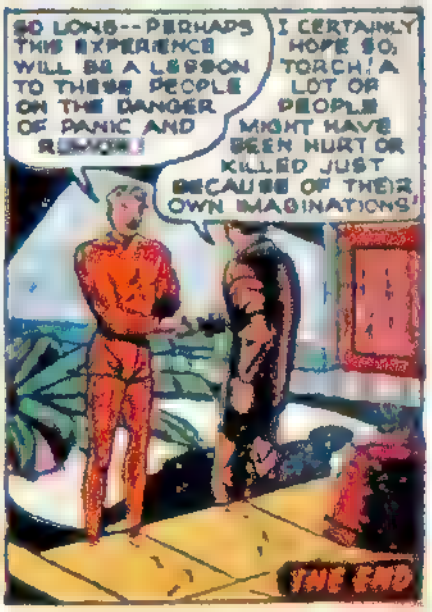
GOT IT!
GOOD-BY, EVERYBODY!

THE HEAT OF TORCH'S BODY MELTS THE SIDE OF THE GIANT WATER-TANK, RELEASING ITS PENT-UP FURY
SPLASH!
AND THE HEAVY SPRAY FROM THE TANK STOPS HIM!

THE TORCH GOES BACK TO HIS NATURAL FORM!
OKAY, FELLA! LET'S GO DOWN AND FACE THE MUSIC!
OH-H-H!

I WAS FIRED FROM THIS HOTEL AND I WANTED TO GET EVEN BY SCARING THE GUESTS! WASN'T I CLEVER?
CRAZY—YOU MEAN!
WE'VE GOT A LITTLE PLACE UPSTATE FOR GUYS LIKE YOU! LET'S GO
8

HE RIGGED UP THAT GIANT BALLOON OUT OF THE WINDOW, FIGURING IT WOULD SCARE EVERYBODY AWAY AND RUIN THE HOTEL! A WARPED MIND CAN DO WARPED THINGS!
IT ALMOST WORKED! IT ALMOST WORKED!
FUNNY, WHAT A GUY'LL DO FOR REVENGE!


SO LONG—PERHAPS THIS EXPERIENCE WILL BE A LESSON TO THESE PEOPLE ON THE DANGER OF PANIC AND RUMOR!
I CERTAINLY HOPE SO, TORCH! A LOT OF PEOPLE MIGHT HAVE BEEN HURT OR KILLED JUST BECAUSE OF THEIR OWN IMAGINATIONS!
THE END

LITTLE THINGS ARE IMPORTANT

MOONLIGHT bathed the mountain lake in liquid silver as George Parton paddled swiftly toward the hotel dock. He was careful that no one saw him as he pulled the canoe up the sloping beach. He left it there and carried the single paddle with him along the narrow, shadowy path to the hotel. Nobody noticed him dart into one of the hotel side doors and hurry to the room which the hotel had given his uncle, William Johnson. Still carrying the paddle, he unlocked the door, walked in and closed the door swiftly and quietly behind him.

It was a luxurious little suite on the ground floor—a foyer, a small, handsome living room, a bedroom and a bath. It was unlighted now, with only the silvery glow streaming through the windows. Parton knew that his uncle wouldn't be home yet. He had gone to the movies in town with friends, and would be back about midnight.

Parton's heart was pounding as he laid the paddle on a couch. The corridor door was the only entrance to the suite, and Parton fixed its spring lock so that it was locked from the inside. The big, ornate silver paper knife was on the desk. Quietly, methodically, Parton wrapped its handle in a big handkerchief. Then, knife in hand, he stood in the starlit dimness of the foyer by the entrance door, waiting.

Queer, how violently his heart was beating! He had planned all this so carefully, and he was sure it had to be done. His quarrel with his uncle this afternoon had made that plain beyond the shadow of a doubt, because Parton had suddenly found himself in a terrible jam. William Johnson was a wealthy bachelor and was now dickering to buy this big hotel. Parton had figured, of course, that his uncle would make him the hotel manager with a wonderful salary and a luxurious place to live.

He had told Marjorie all about it, and it had sounded perfect to her, too. They could get married, and they'd have plenty of money. Their plans were all settled.

But William Johnson would have none of it. And in the quarrel they had, Parton realized quickly that his uncle had no plans for him at all—nothing except that Parton should stop being what he called a spendthrift, living on his uncle's money, refusing to get himself a job. "Why, I wouldn't buy a *peanut* stand and put *you* in charge of it!" Johnson had snapped. It was a nasty quarrel with a lot of threats thrown at Parton, but nothing that this little knife thrust wouldn't fix. Johnson would have no chance to change his will. A single thrust—and with his inheritance Parton would be able to buy the hotel himself! He'd be its owner, manager, the whole works. Marjorie would certainly be thrilled with a setup like that!

The whole thing was clear in Parton's racing thoughts as his cold, sweating hand gripped the knife and he stood waiting in the dim little foyer. Then his heart leaped and seemed to stick in his throat. A step sounded outside the locked door. Johnson had come back! Parton tensed. In the heavy silence he heard Johnson's muttered exclamation that the door was locked. Then his key went into the lock. The door opened inward, and as it swung, Parton hid behind it. Then Johnson came in, closing the door which clicked as it locked again.

Here it was! In the dimness Johnson's figure was just a big blob as he tossed his hat onto the table and reached to switch on the room lights. But his hand never got to the switch. Silently, like a pouncing animal, Parton leaped and stabbed at Johnson's back! But the older man must have heard him. The knife cut into his shoulder, but he was able to turn around, and suddenly they

STAMP NEWS

By KENT B. STILES

Notwithstanding the deluge of special stamps earlier announced at Washington for release during 1948 the Post Office Department has added five. The revised schedule commits the Department to at least fifteen such adhesives from January through December—and if you are looking for a reason for this generous output you can reflect that this is an election year! The more persons who are pleased before November arrives, the more votes the Democratic candidates should, theoretically, receive. Or so some politicians seem to think!

Congress enacted a bill calling for a stamp to commemorate the Swedish Pioneer Centennial being observed in the American Mid-West this Summer. President Truman promptly vetoed it. Shortly thereafter he changed his mind and directed the stamp be printed—and it appeared, a 3c in dark blue and light blue, on June 4. The design shows a Swedish pioneer moving Westward with a covered wagon a century ago. Six stars at left and six stars at right represent twelve States in which the Swedish immigrants settled.

The second additional stamp announced is one to honor Clara Barton (1821 - 1912), who was the first president of the American Red Cross.

The third promised item will mark the centennial of the creating of Oregon Territory, from which were carved the States of Oregon, Washington, Idaho and parts of Montana and Wyoming.

Recalling a century of "peace and cooperation" between the United States and Canada will be a "special" to appear probably in August. The two countries have been at peace longer than a century, so what the stamp will specifically recall is the building of the first suspension bridge across the Niagara gorge between Niagara Falls, N. Y., and Niagara Falls, Ontario, in 1848.

A Hungarian air series carries portraits of persons associated with transportation. Most of the men honored are philatelic familiars, but three are newcomers to our hobby's gallery:

80 AMERICAN
All different Stamps from North America
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STAMPS FROM COLONIES, OCEANIA, CANADIAN

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GIGANTIC CANADIAN BARGAIN
1c 1c

100 WORLDWIDE 5c
DIFFERENT STAMPS
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BOSWELL STAMP CO.

50 HUNGARY 5c
All Different
To Approval Buyers
GOLDEN STAMP CO.

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118 DIFFERENT STAMPS
TO APPROVAL BUYERS

55 DIFFERENT U. S. 5c
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29 FRENCH COLONIES

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ALL FREE
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TRIPLE ECO AIRMAIL TRIANGLE — FREE!
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were struggling. It was a chaotic horror to Parton, a horror in which he somehow heard Johnson's hard breathing, the sound of a chair going over as they fought. Then Parton stabbed again—a minute or two more of gruesome struggle, but finally the knife found its mark and Johnson fell with only a gasping cry left in his throat. Parton left the knife in its target and staggered back against the wall.

The thing was done! Johnson lay dead on the floor with the moonlight shining on him . . . Get out of here, quick now! Get back to the dock! . . . Parton had planned to do that. But he hadn't counted on a struggle with his victim. He darted toward the corridor door, but stopped, panic-stricken, with terror flooding him. The fight had aroused the hotel! People were out in the corridor! He couldn't leave by this door!

In that terrible second Parton ran for one of the living room windows. But all of them had screens, and the screens were built into the window frames! No way of sliding them up! He was trapped! At the corridor door people were pounding and rattling the knob. Parton ran back to the living room window. He had a big penknife in his pocket. He opened it and cut the screen with two long slashes, vertically and horizontally, making a cross. Then he remembered his paddle! He shoved it through the cut screen, and it fell to the ground outside the window. He was about to push his way out and drop to the ground, but he saw he was too late! A couple of bellboys were dashing into view from around the distant hotel corner, and they'd see him escaping!

Caught here like a rat in a trap! But by some miracle Parton collected his wits. He knew what he must do—his last desperate chance. He stood at the window and bent the four big triangular flaps of the cut screen inward. The distant bellboys wouldn't be able to say that he hadn't climbed in here from outside just a few seconds ago. Nobody could prove that he hadn't!

Then Parton turned back to the dim living room. He dashed for the corridor door, shouting, "He's dead! Somebody killed him!" He flung open the door, gasping that he had heard a fight in here, had cut the window screen and climbed in. The room immediately became flooded with hotel attendants—a chaos of confusion. Frightened guests crowded in the corridor outside.

"The killer must be here!" Parton cried. "I heard him in here!"

But where was he? Rance, the big hotel detective, arrived. They had all searched the little suite, but they hadn't found the killer.

"He must have run out into the corridor," Parton said. "I was outside the window so I dropped my paddle and cut the screen."

And he had proof of that—he displayed his penknife. "Yeah, that's what cut the screen," Rance agreed. "You can see the green paint on the blade."

But how did the killer get out? The bellboys in the corridor had heard the struggle in here. "He didn't come out the door," one of them said. "We would've seen him!"

"You could be mistaken," Parton said calmly. He was quite calm now even though everybody here was gazing at him suspiciously. So what? They couldn't prove he hadn't come in the window!

Then the proof came like a bombshell. Rance was at the window, examining the cut screen. And suddenly he swung around. "You're a liar!" he charged. "You didn't come in this window!"

"I certainly did," Parton said. "I was outside, I cut the screen, climbed in . . ."

"Did you?" Rance roared. "Come take a look at the proof that you didn't! You bent the big flaps of the cut screen inward. Sure you did! But if you'd cut it from *outside*, all the little wire prongs of the cut screening would have been bent *inward* with your knife thrust! But these . . ."

Horrible little prongs of cut wire! His knife slash, as he stood in the room, had bent them all outward!

"No argument! We've got you!" Rance was saying. And the numb, stricken Parton could only mutter, "These terrible little things—I never gave them a thought!"

THE END

SUB-MARINER

WHAT'S *YOUR* PET SUPERSTITION? IS FRIDAY THE 13TH UNLUCKY FOR YOU? HOW ABOUT BLACK CATS? WALKING UNDER LADDERS? GEORGIE JENKS COULDN'T EVEN CROSS THE STREET WITHOUT CROSSING HIS FINGERS FIRST! HE WAS THE ORIGINAL *HARD-LUCK KID*, AND WAS BORN UNDER AN UNLUCKY STAR! WHAT A WAY TO FACE LIFE UNTIL

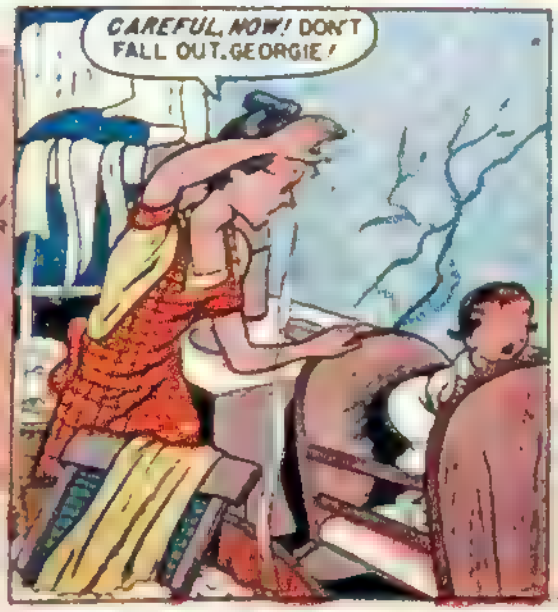
SUB-MARINER

DECIDED THAT LUCK IS WHAT *YOU* MAKE IT, IN

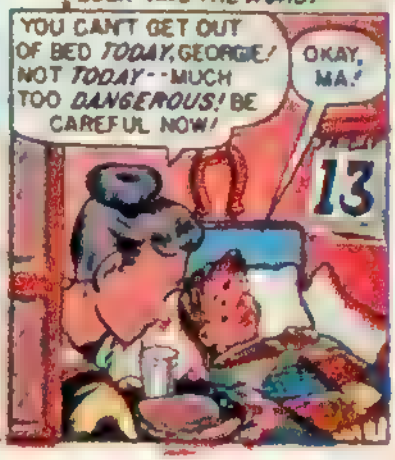
"A JINX FOR GEORGIE JENKS!"

LET'S SEE – I'VE GOT A RABBIT'S FOOT, MY LUCKY CHARM! AND TODAY IS MY LUCKY DAY -- *I HOPE!*

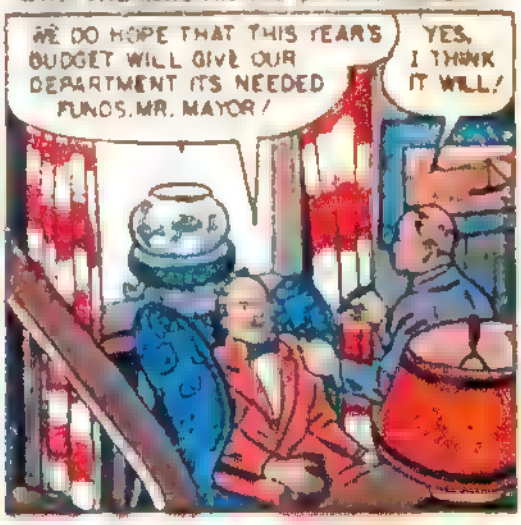
THE JENKS FAMILY SHOULD HAVE BEEN NAMED JINX! THEY HAD ALWAYS HAD VERY HARD LUCK! GEORGIE'S MOTHER HAD BEEN UNLUCKY ENOUGH TO MARRY A MAN WHO HAD NEVER PROVIDED FOR HER -- AND SHE TOOK IN WASHING TO SUPPORT GEORGIE AND HERSELF!



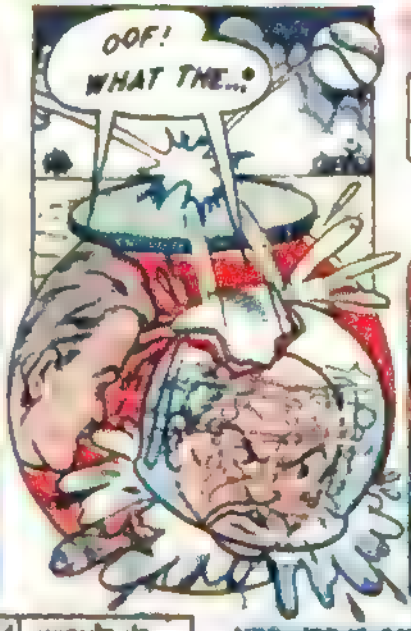
GEORGIE GREW OLDER, AND WHEN A VERY DANGEROUS DAY CAME ALONG, HIS MOTHER HAD TO BE *VERY* CAREFUL, BECAUSE OF ALL THE JENKS FAMILY, GEORGIE'S LUCK WAS THE *WORST!*



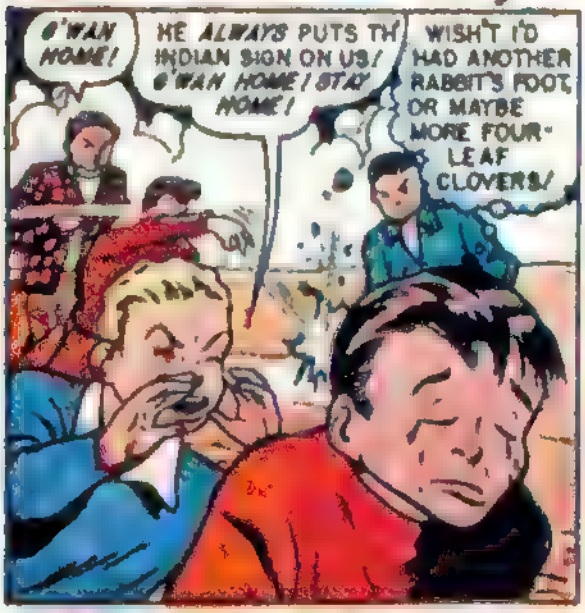
WHEN HE WAS TWELVE, GEORGIE LOVED BASEBALL! HE AND THE KIDS HAD A SWELL FIELD!
OKAY, GEORGIE, WHAM IT!
SURE! SURE!

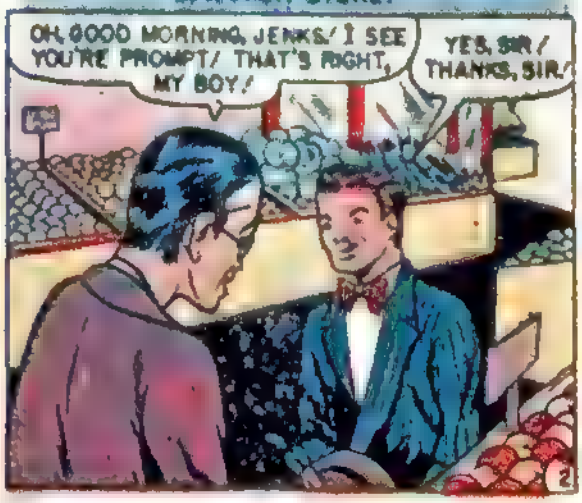

IT WAS TOO BAD THAT JUST AT THAT MINUTE, THE POLICE COMMISSIONER WAS CONSULTING WITH THE MAYOR IN THE MAYOR'S HOME!
WE DO HOPE THAT THIS YEAR'S BUDGET WILL GIVE OUR DEPARTMENT ITS NEEDED FUNDS, MR. MAYOR!
YES, I THINK IT WILL!

IT WAS ALSO UNLUCKY THAT GEORGIE WAS A VERY GOOD HITTER! THE MAYOR'S HOUSE WAS PRETTY FAR AWAY, BUT...
YEOW!
THAT SURE IS A HOMER!
OH, BOY!
WOW!


OOF! WHAT THE...?

THAT WAS THE END OF THAT BEAUTIFUL BALL FIELD!
YOU BOYS KEEP AWAY FROM HERE! IF YOU EVER--
I DID IT! I'M SURE SORRY, YER HONOR!


G'WAN HOME!
HE ALWAYS PUTS TH' INDIAN SIGN ON US! G'WAN HOME! STAY HOME!
WISH'T I'D HAD ANOTHER RABBIT'S FOOT, OR MAYBE MORE FOUR-LEAF CLOVERS!


MRS. JENKS DIDN'T DARE LET GEORGIE TAKE A JOB UNTIL HE WAS PRETTY WELL GROWN UP! HE GOT HIS FIRST JOB, WHEN HE WAS NINETEEN, IN A FRUIT STORE!
OH, GOOD MORNING, JENKS! I SEE YOU'RE PROMPT! THAT'S RIGHT, MY BOY!
YES, SIR! THANKS, SIR!

IT WAS MONDAY, THE 11TH! THE 7TH OR 11TH OF THE MONTH SHOULD BE *LUCKY!* BUT LATER THAT AFTERNOON...

YOU CAN FINISH IT, JENKS! PILE THEM NEATLY WITH A BIG ONE AT THE TOP!

Y-YES, SIR!

GEORGIE HAD ALWAYS HAD A LOT OF TROUBLE WITH LADDERS! THEY MADE HIM NERVOUS! WHEN YOU'RE NERVOUS, YOUR KNEES WOBBLE! AND WHEN YOUR KNEES WOBBLE, YOUR FOOT CAN SLIP!

OH-H-H!

OOOF!

OHH!

GO ON, GET OUT OF HERE! YOU'RE FIRED!

YESS'R!

MRS. JENKS GOT GEORGIE HIS NEXT JOB! BRIGHT AND EARLY HE STARTED FOR WORK! IT WAS AN ANTIQUE SHOP, WHICH SOUNDED BAD! BUT HE HAD PLENTY OF FOUR-LEAF CLOVERS AND RABBITS' FEET WITH HIM!

NOW, GEORGIE, *BE CAREFUL!* IF THERE'S A BLACK CAT THERE, YOU COME RIGHT HOME!

YES, MA! I SURE WILL!

GHASTLY FRIGHTENING PLACE! AT FIRST GEORGIE WAS AFRAID TO MOVE IN IT AT ALL!

OMIGOSH!

AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION IS WORTH A POUND OF CURE! GEORGIE DECIDED TO TAKE NO CHANCES IN A PLACE LIKE THIS! SO THE NEXT MORNING, BEFORE THE BOSS ARRIVED...

THIS OUGHT TO HELP!

IT WAS TERRIBLY UNLUCKY THAT GEORGIE DIDN'T NAIL THE HORSESHOE FIRMLY ENOUGH AND PRETTY BAD LUCK THAT A CUSTOMER CAME IN AND SLAMMED THE DOOR WITH A FEARFUL JAR!

SLAM!

OH-H-H!

THOSE STATUES! FIVE THOUSAND-- AN' THAT'S MY BEST, MY RICHEST CUSTOMER!

CRASH!

EEK!

GOOD-BYE! WHAT A PLACE! I'LL NEVER COME HERE AGAIN!

SO YOU PUT THAT THING UP THERE, DID YOU? YOU LITTLE FOOL! YOU WRETCHED VILLAIN! YOU GET OUT OF MY SHOP!

I ONLY WANTED TO--- YES, SIR! ALL RIGHT

WELL, YOU CAN SEE THAT THINGS WERE PRETTY TOUGH FOR GEORGIE! FOR AMUSEMENT, THE THING GEORGIE LIKED BEST WAS DANCING! HE WAS A GOOD DANCER--AND THERE WAS A GIRL HE LIKED VERY MUCH.....

GEE, MARGE, YOU DANCE SWELL!

SO DO YOU, GEORGIE!

MARGE WAS A NEW GIRL IN TOWN! SHE HADN'T HAD A CHANCE TO HEAR ABOUT GEORGIE, OR SHE WOULDN'T HAVE DARED BE THERE!

IT'S JUST LIKE FLOATING IN AIR, DANCING WITH YOU, GEORGIE! IT'S HEAVENLY!

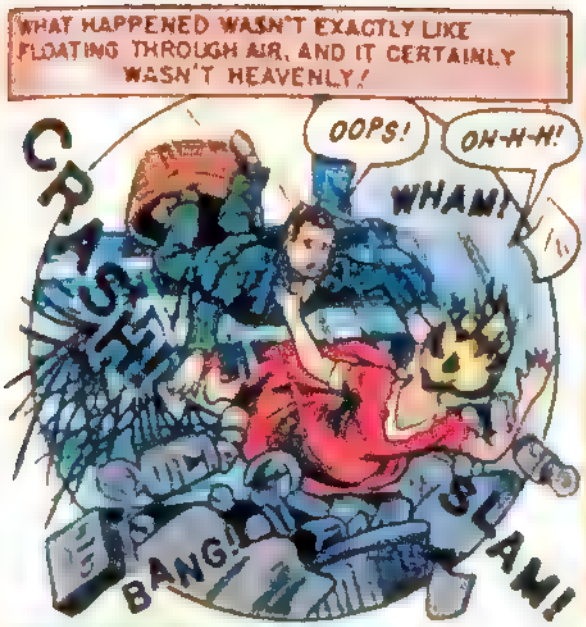
ME, TOO! IT'S--IT'S JUST SWELL!

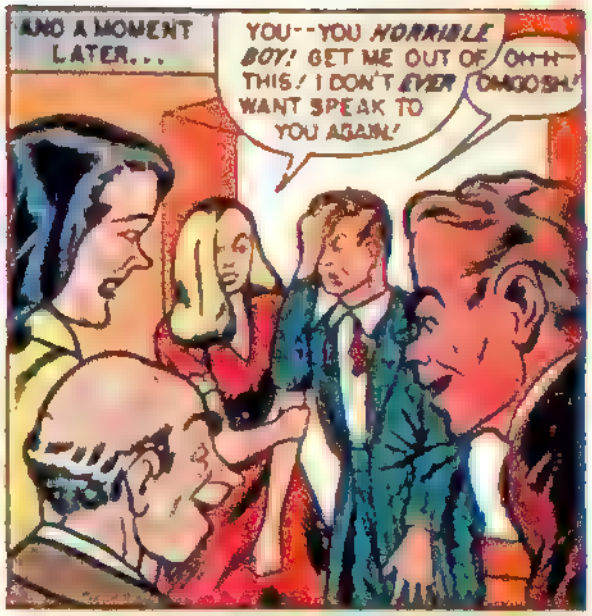
UNLUCKILY, A PAL HAD BEEN MOVED, OR GEORGIE WOULD HAVE SEEN THAT STAIRCASE!

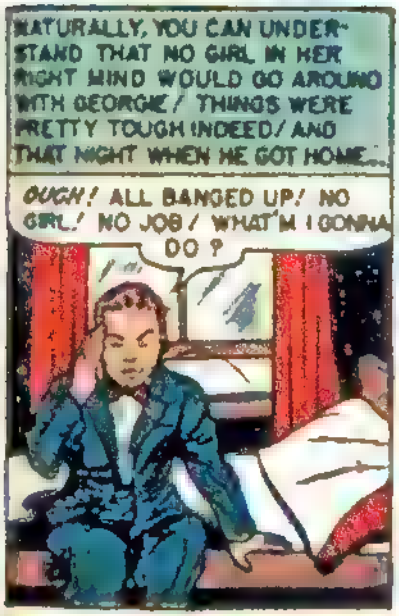
WE'LL SHIFT IT OVER HERE, JAKE! HIDE THOSE UGLY STAIRS!

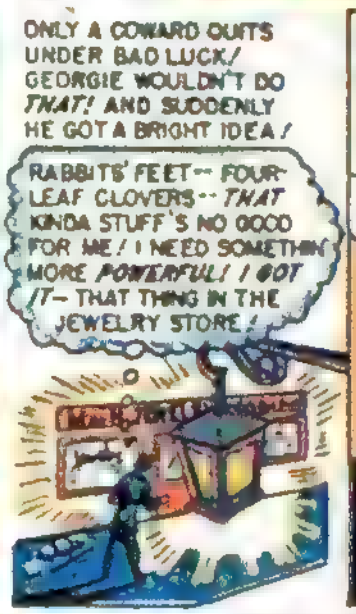
A BOX OF CLOVERS! GEORGIE COULD NEVER RESIST LOOKING FOR A FOUR-LEAFER!

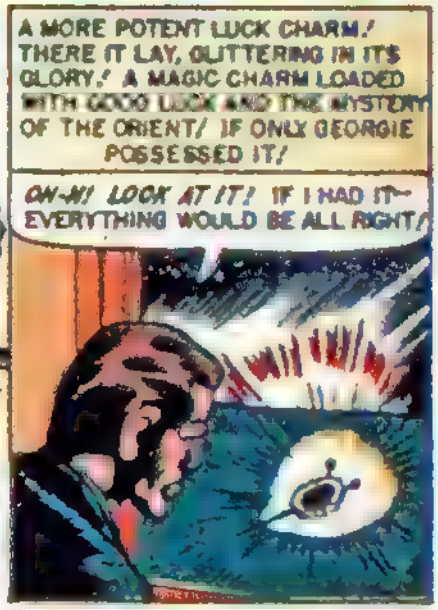
A FOUR-LEAFER! GOOD! GOOD!

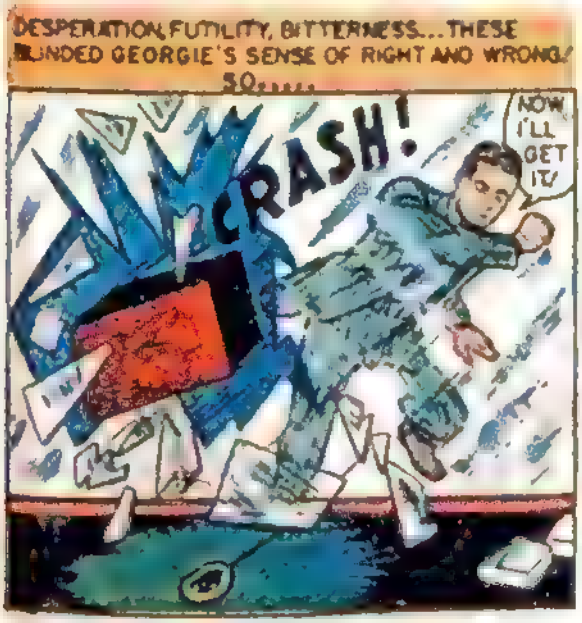

WHAT HAPPENED WASN'T EXACTLY LIKE FLOATING THROUGH AIR, AND IT CERTAINLY WASN'T HEAVENLY!
OOPS!
OH-H-H!
WHAM!
CRASH!
BANG!
SLAM!

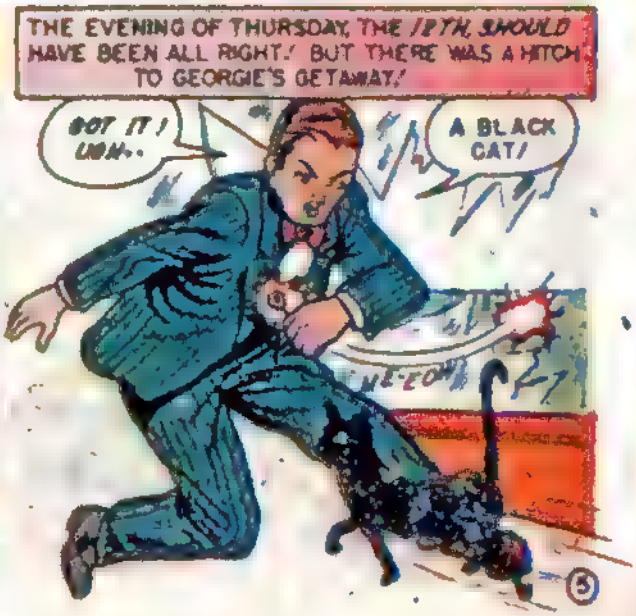

AND A MOMENT LATER...
YOU--YOU HORRIBLE BOY! GET ME OUT OF THIS! I DON'T EVER WANT SPEAK TO YOU AGAIN!
OH-H-OMGOSH!

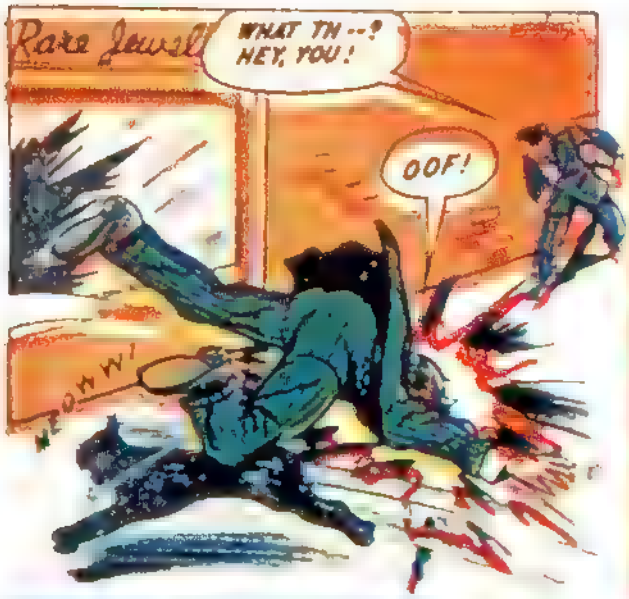

NATURALLY, YOU CAN UNDERSTAND THAT NO GIRL IN HER RIGHT MIND WOULD GO AROUND WITH GEORGIE! THINGS WERE PRETTY TOUGH INDEED! AND THAT NIGHT WHEN HE GOT HOME...
OUCH! ALL BANGED UP! NO GIRL! NO JOB! WHAT'M I GONNA DO?


ONLY A COWARD QUITS UNDER BAD LUCK! GEORGIE WOULDN'T DO THAT! AND SUDDENLY HE GOT A BRIGHT IDEA!
RABBITS' FEET-- FOUR-LEAF CLOVERS-- THAT KINDA STUFF'S NO GOOD FOR ME! I NEED SOMETHIN' MORE POWERFUL! I GOT IT-- THAT THING IN THE JEWELRY STORE!

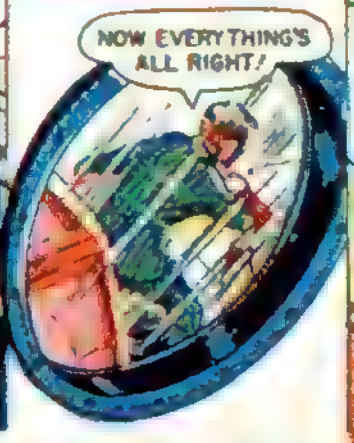

A MORE POTENT LUCK CHARM! THERE IT LAY, GLITTERING IN ITS GLORY! A MAGIC CHARM LOADED WITH GOOD LUCK AND THE MYSTERY OF THE ORIENT! IF ONLY GEORGIE POSSESSED IT!
OH-H! LOOK AT IT! IF I HAD IT-- EVERYTHING WOULD BE ALL RIGHT!

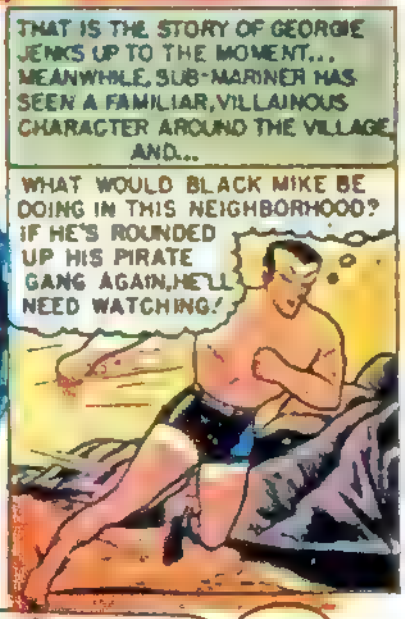

DESPERATION, FUTILITY, BITTERNESS... THESE BLINDED GEORGIE'S SENSE OF RIGHT AND WRONG! SO.....
CRASH!
NOW I'LL GET IT!

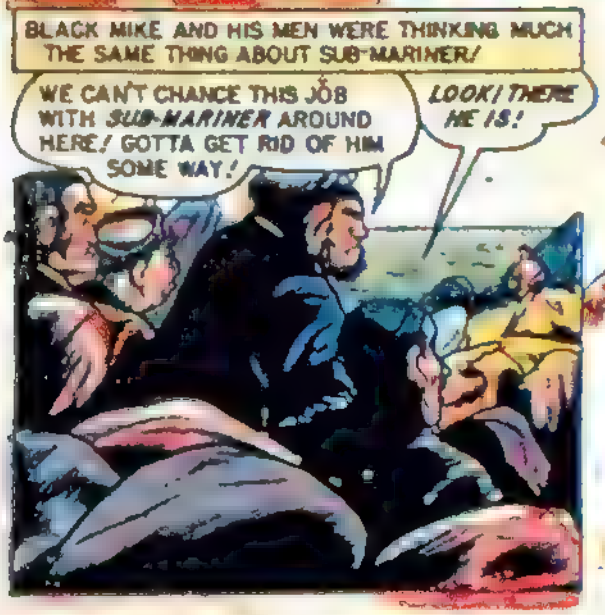

THE EVENING OF THURSDAY, THE 12TH, SHOULD HAVE BEEN ALL RIGHT! BUT THERE WAS A HITCH TO GEORGIE'S GETAWAY!
GOT IT! UGH..
A BLACK CAT!
ME-OW

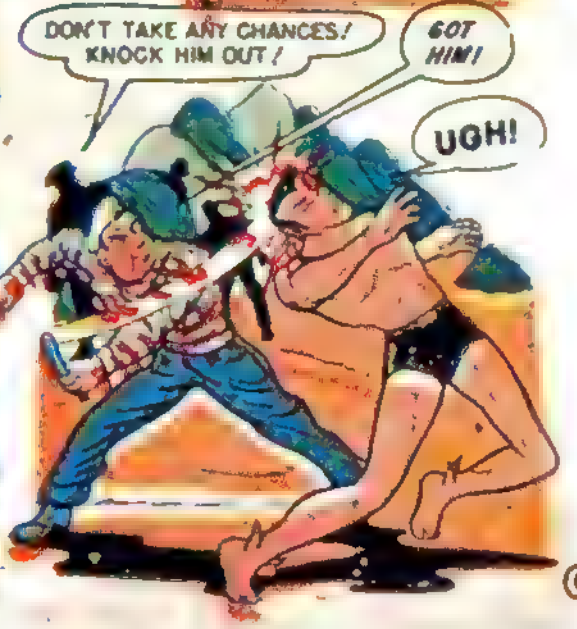


PRESENTLY IN THE DARKNESS OF THE LITTLE VESSEL, GEORGIE CROUCHED, A STOWAWAY!









THE HALF-CONSCIOUS SUB-MARINER IS AWARE THAT HE HAS BEEN BOUND AND GAGGED AND IS BEING CARRIED ABOARD A SHIP...
LIE QUIET, PAL! WE'LL SEE WHAT BLACK MIKE WANTS TO DO WITH YOU LATER!
WE'LL BE SAILIN' SOON!
"SAILING SOON!" OUT IN THE DARK NEARBY CORRIDOR, THE CROUCHING GEORGIE HEARS THE WORDS! BUT THERE IS SOMETHING QUEER ABOUT ALL THIS TO HIM!
HEY, WHAT KIND OF SHIP DID I GET ONTO? THAT WAS SUB-MARINER THEY CARRIED IN THERE!
GEORGIE HAS MADE A SLIGHT ERROR AND NOW HE PLAGUES IT!
I'M ON A BANDIT SHIP! THEY GOT SUB-MARINER A PRISONER IN THERE! OMIGOSH!
THEN HE FEELS THE MOTION OF THE SHIP! ALREADY THEY ARE SAILING OUT OF THE HARBOR! GEORGE KNOWS WHAT HE HAS TO DO! BUT SUDDENLY, HE HEARS THE BELL...
EIGHT BELLS! MIDNIGHT! FRIDAY THE 13TH! I'M WRECKED!
TING-TING TING-TING!
BUT DESPITE THE HORRIBLE HANDICAP, GEORGIE UNTIES SUB-MARINER AND THEN...
THANKS! THEY'RE PLANNING TO PIRATE AN INCOMING LINER! WE--
WOW!
HEY! WHAT TH--HE'S LOOSE!
OKAY! WE'LL START WITH YOU!
EEEEOWW!
GEORGIE IS NOT SO BAD HIMSELF!
SURE NEVER THOUGHT I'D BE DOIN' ANYTHING LIKE THIS ON A FRIDAY TH' 13TH!
OOF!

BUT THE BANDITS SUDDENLY GATHER LIKE ANNOYING BEAST OF PREY!
WE'LL FINISH THIS IN THE WATER! LEAP, GEORGIE!
HERE I GO!
WITH THE GREAT STRENGTH THE SEA GIVES HIM, SUB-MARINER HURLS HIMSELF AT THE PROW OF THE LITTLE VESSEL AND...
GEORGIE IS A GOOD SWIMMER! BLACK MIKE IS NOT! GEORGIE'S INTENTIONS ARE GOOD, BUT...
YOU'RE A DIRTY DOG, BUT I GUESS I GOTTA SAVE YOU ANYHOW!
GEORGIE IS MAKING SPEED TOWARD A WATERY GRAVE WHEN LUCKILY SUB-MARINER SEES HIM!
WELL!
BLUB! BLUB!
BUBBLE! BLUB!
THE COAST GUARD SHIPS ARE COMING TO PICK UP THE OTHERS!
I'M OKAY NOW! THANKS, SUB-MARINER!
BLUB! UMPH!
WITH SUB MARINER EXPLAINING, GEORGIE RETURNS THE MAHARAJA'S FAMOUS JEWEL, AND GEORGIE'S APOLOGIES ARE ACCEPTED. GEORGIE REALLY HATES TO GIVE IT UP!
...THAT'S THE STORY, YOUR HONOR! HE WAS INVALUABLE TO ME, ROUNDING UP BLACK MIKE AND HIS GANG!
AHEM! WELL, GEORGIE, THIS COURT SUSPENDS SENTENCE AND PLACES YOU IN SUB-MARINER'S CUSTODY!
SURE WAS A POWERFUL LUCK CHARM! NOW IT'S GONE!
ANOTHER FRIDAY THE 13TH IS HERE, AND THE HARVEST DANCE CONTEST IS BEING HELD! AS SUB-MARINER LOOKS ON, THE JUDGES AWARD NUMBER 13 THE GRAND PRIZE! AND NUMBER 13 IS--YUP! GEORGIE AND MARGE!
I CHOOSE NUMBER 13!
RIGHT!
ME, TOO!
I GOT THE JINX LICKED, MARGE--I HOPE!
SURE YOU HAVE, GEORGIE!
THE WOMAN!
GO ON, SCRAM! BEAT IT! SCAT!
BIFF!
THE END

SUB-MARINER
QUIZ PAGE!
AHOY THERE, MATES! HERE'S ANOTHER SUB-MARINER QUIZ TO WHET YOUR APPETITE FOR INFORMATION! WHEN NAMOR WAS ASKED THEM, HE GOT A PERFECT SCORE! LET'S SEE HOW YOU FARE!
THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER GETS ITS NAME FROM AN INDIAN WORD —"MISSISIPPI," MEANING "GREAT RIVER"! WHAT INDIAN TRIBE SUPPLIED THE WORD?
1- CHOCTAW
2- ALGONQUIN
3- PUEBLO
4- NAVAJO
ANSWER: 2—THE ALGONQUIN TRIBE!
HERE'S ONE FROM THE AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY WAR—ACROSS WHAT RIVER WAS A HUGE CHAIN STRETCHED TO PREVENT THE PASSAGE OF BRITISH SHIPS?
1—POTOMAC 2—DELAWARE 3—EAST 4—HUDSON
ANSWER: THE HUDSON IS CORRECT! BETWEEN WEST POINT AND CONSTITUTION ISLAND!
BELOW ARE LISTED FOUR NAMES—WHICH MAN WAS CREDITED WITH BUILDING THE FIRST MODEL OF A HYDROPLANE TYPE BOAT?
1— ROBERT FULTON
2— CYRUS FIELD
3—THOMAS A. EDISON
4—REV. CHARLES MEADE RAMUS
ANSWER: 4—RAMUS—AND HE WAS FROM SUSSEX, ENGLAND!
HERE'S A SIMPLE ONE, YET CONFUSING! IS IRELAND AN ISLAND?
ANSWER: YES! IRELAND IS AN ISLAND—COMMONLY CALLED THE EMERALD ISLE!
ONLY THE RICE IN THIS PICTURE IS CONCERNED WITH OUR QUESTION—HOW WOULD YOU SAY THE JAPANESE FARMER IRRIGATES HIS RICE LANDS? 1—GARDEN HOSE 2—BUCKET BRIGADE 3—WATER WHEEL
ANSWER: YOU PROBABLY ANSWERED CORRECTLY—THE WATER WHEEL!
IS THIS POSSIBLE—PEARLS IN AN AMERICAN RIVER? WHAT DO YOU SAY? HAVE PEARLS EVER BEEN FOUND IN AN AMERICAN RIVER?
ANSWER: SOME PEARLS HAVE BEEN FOUND IN OYSTERS IN THE LITTLE MIAMI RIVER OF WARREN COUNTY OHIO, AND ALSO IN THE MISSISSIPPI!

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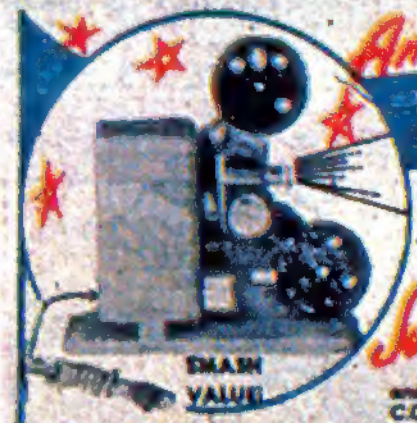

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